

# Your Money

by Cheryl Hanson Simpson



## **Five Steps to Achieving Your Financial Dreams**

*Sometimes I dream about being a financial success –owning my own home and having enough money to buy nice things for my two children. Then I remember my present ‘hand-to-mouth’ existence, and I feel hopeless and depressed. I’m tired of worrying about money! Can you show me how to start turning my dreams into reality? - Dreaming*

We all have dream wish-lists that we like to think about: we hope to one day get rid of our landlords and turn our own keys; we wish that somehow we could be rescued from the jobs we hate; we desire that our children would be able to live better lives than we did.

Why is it that many people never seem to achieve their financial dreams? Sometimes if we dare to speak out about the big things we want out of life, we’re met with the words, “Stop dreaming and get real!” So we accept our present condition as our reality and give up without a fight. Sometimes we set out achieve our dreams by a game of chance, and figure that the next Lotto draw is going to be our ticket out of poverty. Sometimes we just can’t be bothered to put in the time and energy necessary to make our dreams come true.

Here is a five-step plan to help you achieve your financial dreams:

### **Focus on your dream**

It is more likely that you will achieve your dreams if you focus on them intently. Think about your dream when you wake up, and when you go to bed. Use all your senses to create the ideal picture of your desire. If you want your own house, close your eyes and visualize yourself sitting in your living room with your feet on the soft sofa. What colour are the walls? Smell the aroma of the Sunday dinner cooking in the kitchen. Hear the laughter of your children playing in the backyard.

### **Have strong belief**

Deep down inside you must really believe without a shadow of doubt that you can get what you want. If you really don’t think that you’re capable of achieving your goal, then you won’t! You can’t trick your mind. Disbelief is negative power, when you doubt, your mind will attract reasons and excuses why you will fail. History is full of stories of people who defied all the odds and achieved big dreams because of their belief and determination.

### **Be realistic**

Although it’s important to have big dreams, we also need to be realistic. If you only have \$10,000 in the bank, it’s probably unlikely that you’re going buy your dream house for cash in six months time. When you set unrealistic goals you set yourself up for frustration and failure. You need to set SMART objectives to achieve your dreams. Goals that are more likely to be attained are:

- S** Specific
- M** Measurable
- A** Actionable
- R** Realistic
- T** Time-based

“I want to own my own home,” is a vague wish. “In two years time, I want to purchase a two bedroom house in St Catherine valued at \$4 million dollars,” is a SMART goal.

### **Create a plan**

Many times our dreams die quiet deaths because we don’t spend the time to figure out how they are actually going to happen. It’s not enough to just want something, you must make an action plan of what you need to do to make it happen. Ask yourself “If I want to achieve this thing in x number of years, what do I have to do today to get there?” Don’t say “I can’t,” ask “How can I?”

### **Seek professional guidance**

You are going to need all the help you can get, so seek the advice of experts. A financial planning professional can help you to create an investment plan to buy that home or send your children to college. If a successful business is your dream, then get suggestions from JAMPRO or the Jamaica Business Development Centre. Information abounds on the internet, so keep searching for ways to actualize your dream.

### **Defeat dream stoppers**

One of the biggest dream killers is fear. Fear of failure or of the unknown can keep us trapped in our comfort zones instead of seeking to accomplish our big dreams. Try to flip fear around and make it work in your favour- create a fear for what will happen if you don’t achieve that big goal.

There are likely to be setbacks along the path to achieving your dream. The key is to examine those setbacks for possible opportunities. Try to be flexible and realize that there may be more than one way to achieve your goals. Sometimes disappointments can open new doors to get something better than you ever dreamed.

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